

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
NEW ENGLAND ZOÖLOGICAL CLUB

A NEW BORNEAN LIZARD

BY THOMAS BARBOUR

PROFESSOR HARRISON W. SMITH, who has so often enriched the collections of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy with the booty of his many journeys, has forwarded to me recently a fine suite of reptiles and amphibians from the Mt. Lundu and the Tinjar River districts of Sarawak, Borneo. Among the lizards appears a curious *Tropidophorus*. The East Indian species of this genus have been summarized, as recently as 1915, by Miss Nelly De Rooij (Reptiles Indo-Australian Archipelago, I, 1915, p. 275). Her descriptions unfortunately take little or no account of variation within the species, and no one specimen appears to be the basis of each description, and while the diagnoses are apparently drawn from series of individuals, we are not informed as to the number actually examined. Miss De Rooij's book is invaluable, yet one notes for instance (p. 277) under the description of *Tropidophorus brookei* that the prae-frontals are said to be in contact. Boulenger, who had but two specimens when he wrote his diagnosis in the Catalogue of Lizards in the British Museum (III, 1887, p. 361) says "prae-frontals forming a median suture (separated, probably abnormally, in the type specimen)." Now the fact is that the opposite,

viz., prefrontals widely separated, is really the normal condition, as is shown by six examples from Professor Harrison Smith's collection. Nevertheless, since I do not know how many specimens Miss De Rooij had, I am at a loss to determine whether possibly this character is linked with some definite area of distribution. Smith's lot came, five from Mt. Lundu, and one from Baram, whence the species has previously been recorded. To cite another occasion where Miss De Rooij has, unfortunately, copied Boulenger, in what may have been a lapsus, both speak of *Cylindrophis rufus* as having an eye equal in diameter to half its distance from the nostril. In our large series not one has an eye nearly so large. Again, in this species the ventrals are spoken of as being larger than the surrounding scales, whereas, in fact, they are so very little larger except in extremely young specimens, that the character has no conspicuous diagnostic value. These, also, have eyes a little larger than in the adults. Thus unfortunately do errors perpetuate themselves, which at first sight appear trivial but which multiply synonyms as the years pass. I confess, frankly, to having already sought names for another new *Tropidophorus* and a new *Cylindrophis* until I had gone farther than I was led by these otherwise most useful keys.

The lizard which I believe undescribed, I shall call

***Tropidophorus perplexus* sp. nov.**

Type, a single male specimen, M. C. Z., no. 14,632, from a hill near the Fort at Long Loba, Tinjar River, Sarawak. "Very swift. Taken when splitting open a rotten log. Caught with difficulty." — H. W. Smith.

Shields of head rugose; frontonasal divided, the pair as broad as long; prefrontals considerably in contact; frontal as long as frontoparietals and interparietal together; five supraoculars, first largest; five or six superciliaries anterior to the fourth supraocular, which itself borders the eye; frontoparietals shorter than interparietal; parietals broadly in contact behind the latter; six upper labials, fifth very large and entering the orbit; four lower labials, second and third extremely long and narrow; tympanum nearly as large as eye opening; body moderately slender, with thirty rows of scales around the middle; dorsal and laterals strongly keeled, ten median